



Is Bisphenol A an environmental obesogen?

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Bisphenol a (BPA) is an endocrine disruptor with an estrogenic activity that is widely produced for the manufacture of polycarbonate plastic, epoxy resin and thermal paper. Its ubiquitous presence in the environment contributes to broad and continuous human exposure which has been associated with deleterious health effects. Despite numerous controversial discussions and a lack of consensus about BPA's safety, growing evidence indicates that BPA exposure positively correlates with an increased risk of developing obesity. An updated analysis of the epidemiological, in vivo and in vitro studies indicates that BPA should be considered an obesogenic environmental compound. Precisely, BPA exposure during all life stages correlates with increased body weight and/or body mass index (BMI). Developmental periods that include prenatal, infancy and childhood appear to be critical windows with increased sensitivity to BPA effects. Finally, blood analysis and in vitro data clearly demonstrate that BPA promotes adipogenesis, lipid and glucose dysregulation and adipose tissue inflammation, thus contributing to the pathophysiology of obesity. Future prevention efforts should now be employed to avoid BPA exposure and more research to determine in depth the critical time windows, doses and impact of long-term exposure of BPA is warranted in order to clarify its risk assessment.

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